

"HARDENING OUR HEART"**Introduction**

1. There is such a thing as "gospel hardening"
2. I met it while preaching in a place
3. It is illustrated here: A blacksmith's dog

1. WHAT IS MEANT BY HEARING GOD'S VOICE

- 1) The following are not meant:
 - (i) Some "inner voice" or "inner light"
 - (ii) The supernatural voice of OT times
 - (iii) Some "word" claimed to be from God now
- 2) It is the gospel message in the Bible
 - (i) it tells us of our present condition
 - (ii) it explains to us the remedy
 - (iii) it requires everyone who hears it to act
- 3) There is always a call to action given:
 - (i) "repent and be converted"
 - (ii) "believe..."
 - (iii) "flee..." / "turn ye..." / "come unto me"

APPLICATION: If you hear this gospel, it is God's voice.

2. HOW MAY PEOPLE HARDEN THEIR HEARTS

- 1) This is the danger – to despise the message
ILLUSTRATION: Jehoiakim – burnt the role
- 2) This can be done in different ways:
 - (i) God's messenger despised: ex. Amos
 - (ii) The preacher praised and ignored: Ezekiel
 - (iii) Human wisdom trusted in: Athenious
 - (iv) Fault found with our lives: Christ and John
 - (v) Earthly riches too great: Rich Ruler
 - (vi) Earthly friends too valuable: "hate"

(vii) They stop short: "Almost...persuaded"

APPLICATION: Do you see your own heart here?

3. THIS SERIOUS CONDITION OF HEART ILLUSTRATED

- 1) v.8-9: Here God gives a historical example:
 - (i) Massah , or Meribah
 - (ii) the ingratitude towards God was extreme
 - (iii) because of God's love at the Exodus
- 2) Their hardness of heart is fearful:
 - (i) in its perversity – sheer unbelief
 - (ii) and in its consequences – God's oath (v.11)
- 3) The whole episode is used in Hebrews 4 to warn the Jews not to reject Christ
- 4) And it comes also to you + me here:
 - (i) the refusal to follow Christ at all costs
 - (ii) will have fearful consequences

APPLICATION: O let us all take this to heart!

4. GOD REQUIRES ALL WHO HEAR HIS VOICE TO REPENT TODAY

- 1) "Today" – means right NOW. Why NOW?
 - (i) The subject is so utterly serious. **Illustration:** fire
 - (ii) Tomorrow is not promised: Acts 16:32
 - (iii) We owe it to God to respect His love
 - (iv) we owe it to our own soul
 - (v) God may remove His Spirit from us

ILLUSTRATION: Brownlow North

 - (vi) We make it harder for ourself + others
- 2) "Today"! O make your move NOW:
Examples: Samuel / the first Disciples

CONCLUSION

1. Some provoked for 40 years!
2. How old are you?
3. Do you shiver at v.11?

PSALM

95: 1 – 6

106: 13 – 19

95: 7 – 11